

Partnerships That Work

Dallas Region

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Students become 'shadows'

Job Corps Students follow professionals around for a day

By Mitch Meador

Lawton Constitution Staff Writer

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Trainees from Treasure Lake Job Corps Center took part Friday in Groundhog Job Shadow Day along with thousands of employers and students around the country.

At Lawton's Central Fire Station, DaShawn Plato got an "up close and personal" view of a firefighter's life. Firefighter Joe Cintron showed him how to don bunker gear for a fire, starting with the protective nylon scarf that keeps the back of the neck and the sides of the head from getting burned during a flashover.

"There's an alarm that every firefighter carries," Cintron told Plato. "If the firefighter doesn't move for 30 seconds it goes off and keeps getting louder and louder, so that his buddies know he needs help."

The Plexiglas facemask is another safe-

guard, and it's important to make sure the helmet fits down tightly on top of the head, Cintron explained.

There's a surprise when he straps Plato into the seat in the cab of the fire engine. The shoulder harnesses that cross over his chest are actually the supports for a SCOT (Self-Contained Oxygen Tank) pack hidden behind the seat, and when Cintron instructs him to lean forward, the SCOT pack comes with him as a backpack.

There's even an art to releasing the folded fire hose, as Cintron showed Plato how to put it over his shoulder so the hose would unravel with ease as he carried it to the fire.

The 150-foot length of hose behind the cab of this 750-gallon truck is only for short-range use. The back of the truck has a wider range from which to choose - everything from an 1,100-foot stretch of 2 1/2-inch hose to a red line hose for little dumpster fires.

Plato, a transplant from New York City (who moved to Texas when his father got out of the military), is studying business office technology at the Treasure Lake Job Corps Center on the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge. A drummer and keyboardist, his No. 1 choice of a career would probably be music.

"This would be pretty good, too," he said after a look around at Central Fire Station. "I would try it."

Two more students from the business office technology trade, Amy Sifuentez and Amy Caldwell, spent the morning at the offices of the Great Plains Chapter of American Red Cross. This was Sifuentez' second year to do job shadowing at the Red Cross office.

Last year, she used some of her Job Corps skills to file, answer the phone and help with some programs related to American Red Cross volunteers.

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Allan Kaufman... Solving the Problem of Kids who Are Under Eighteen



We've always had a problem with kids under eighteen. We recruit them because we have to by statute. We foolishly give them the same expectations that we give older kids. We do our best to train them for a job we know they probably can't get. Then turn them out into a marketplace that has no use for them because they are too young.

These days we hand them off to a Career Advisor who has to help them get a job and then track them for a year. Is it any wonder the CAs complain?

In all the years I have been around Job Corps, the only sensible solution I have ever

heard to this problem is to keep the kids studying. Okay for those who have the educational background and ability to move on to college. Not so good for those who don't.

Suppose we take a different approach. Don't make the same promises we make to older kids. Instead, promise them a role in a transition group - we could call it "The Community Workforce" - until they are old enough for the outside world. Old enough to support themselves, to own a car and drive, to be legally responsible for their own actions.

The Community Workforce would be a tightly disciplined group that works to improve the community in which the center

is located and also the center itself. (In Phoenix, not far from where I live, the center has handsome dormitories built by the students.) Every Job Corps center has made contributions in its community when called upon.

I'm suggesting that we set up a transition workforce whose job it is to do nothing else and that we staff it largely with kids between sixteen and eighteen. We can supplement it with others whenever more hands or more skills are needed. The kids in this group would continue to study and to receive training until they are ready to tackle the adult job market. That is partly a function of age and partly a function of judgment and maturity.

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Job Corps News

Solving the Problem of Kids who Are Under Eighteen/Allan Kaufman - Continued from Page 1

If we tell these youngsters what to expect when we recruit them they won't sign on expecting to get jobs in six months or three – they'll expect to learn a trade and to work hard applying what they've learned. Job Corps was designed to be a two-year

program, why do we keep walking away from that ideal?

Sixteen and seventeen year old kids shouldn't have to be the Career Advisors' problem. They are a center problem and the centers should take steps to deal with the

problem, not pass it on.

This suggestion could be implemented immediately if we have the will. There is nothing about it we don't know how to do right now. ■

Students become 'shadows' - Job Corps students follow professionals around for a day - Continued from Page 1

Red Cross has been involved with Job Shadowing Day for the past couple of years, explained Ray Polk, executive director of the Lawton chapter. He is working with Treasure Lake on the possibility of getting someone on a regular basis to help out via the School to Work Program.

On Friday, the Treasure Lakers greeted visitors at the front desk and did general office work.

"It's a good foundation for them," Polk said.

Sifuentez, who is from Amarillo, Texas, plans to do advanced training with the Transportation Communications Union in St. Louis when she graduates from Treasure Lake next month. Caldwell, who came from Oklahoma City, wants to go to college to become a pediatrician. She wants to work with children who suffer from leukemia because she has a 4-year-old cousin who suffers from the disease.

But on Friday they got a taste of the busy life of a Red Cross worker, where there is

seldom a lull.

This is the fifth annual Groundhog Job Shadow Day. Since 1998, this initiative to engage students in the world of work has paired student "shadows" with workplace mentors to introduce students to the workplace and demonstrate the connection between academics and careers, according to Claudine Lee, who coordinated the event this year for Treasure Lake. ■

Congratulations Cris!

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La Palabra, student newspaper
David L. Carrasco Job Corps

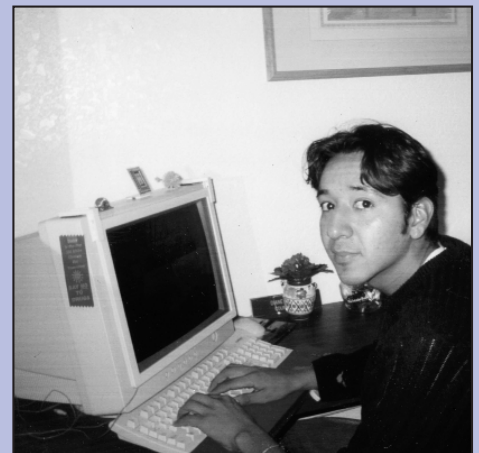
Richard C. Trigg, National Job Corps Director, has announced that Cristobal Rivera, a student at the David L. Carrasco Job Corps Center in El Paso, Texas, has been named one of ten Job Corps students to receive the prestigious Information Technology (IT) scholarship in the amount of \$5,000.

The Federation of Government Information Processing Council/Industry Advisory Council Scholarship is intended to provide Job Corps students and graduates with the

opportunity to pursue careers in the IT field.

Rivera enrolled in the Job Corps program in June 2000 and completed the center's Electronics Assembler Vocational course. He was a member of the center's academics team and received second place in the individual science competition.

He also completed the C-Tech Computer Cable Installer program and the A+ Certification course at El Paso Community College. He is currently enrolled at El Paso Community College through the center's Advanced Career Training program. His career goal is to earn a baccalaureate degree in Computer Science from the University of Texas at El Paso. ■



*Cristobal Rivera - recipient of the \$5,000 Information Technology scholarship.
David L. Carrasco Job Corps Center*

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Job Corps News



Center Tidbits...

Carrasco Job Corps Center

Twenty-three members of the center's 2001 graduating class of 249 were honored with awards and scholarships for their outstanding achievements at the center's 31st Annual Graduation Ceremony in November. The scholarships awarded totaled an impressive \$10,800. Congratulations to the graduating class of 2001!

Fifty David L. Carrasco Job Corps students participated in the annual Groundhog Job Shadow Day on February 1st. Twelve local businesses, many of which are involved in the center's Work-Based Learning program, participated with the center. Employers included Capable Controls/Singer Data Products, Ryder Truck Rental, Hoy-Fox Automotive Group, Radford School, and San Vicente Clinic. Food service students shadowed chefs at Vista Hills Health Care Center and Regent Care Center of El Paso. Welding students worked with welders at V&M Industrial Corporation and BeltCon Construction, Inc. Health Occupations and Rehabilitation Technician students worked at Providence Hospital, Rio Vista Rehabilitation Center, and Sierra Medical Center. The Job Corps center was also a site for 20 Desert View Middle School students who were assigned to the center's offices and training areas.



David L. Carrasco Job Corps Center Automotive Repair Technician student Sinhue Gonzalez (left) "shadowed" Joe Salazar while working at the Ryder Truck Center in El Paso, Texas.

Guthrie Job Corps Center

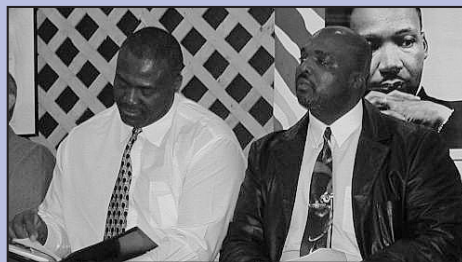
"Make a Difference Day" was in October, but at the Guthrie Job Corps Center "students can be found helping with many

community service projects throughout the year," Mark L. Silvers, Business Community Liaison said. The students have provided security at several city functions, helped set up and take down booths at local festivals, painted playground equipment, and made I.D. cards to aid in the prevention of missing children.

Groundhog Job Shadow Day was indeed successful at the Guthrie Job Corps Center. Over 20 local and distant employers participated by allowing 75 trainees the opportunity to shadow a variety of employers. Guthrie Job Corps students were able to shadow the Red Cross in action, the Guthrie Mayor, Guthrie Police, Navy, a local bakery, Guthrie City Engineer, Guthrie News Leader, and many more. "We have received requests from the employers to have the trainees come back and shadow on a more frequent basis," said Mark L. Silvers, BCL for the Guthrie Job Corps Center.

Ouachita Job Corps Center

Ouachita Job Corps Center students were invited to help Katherine Lundberg, Vice President of "The Fine Arts Center of Hot Springs," and other local youth decorate Central Avenue for the Martin Luther King Parade.



Celebration of Martin Luther King Day - Malcolm Taylor (left), Daryl Pridgen (right)

Malcolm Taylor, a former NFL defensive tackle, spoke at Ouachita Job Corps Center in the center's celebration of Martin Luther King. Mr. Taylor addressed the importance of committing to succeed and overcoming adversity, which Dr. King demonstrated throughout his life. He also encouraged the

students to take advantage of the opportunity they are given through the Job Corps program.

Shreveport Job Corps Center

Shreveport Fire Chief, Kelvin Cochran, accompanied by Assistant Chief, Pat Dyas, addressed staff and students to present certificates to those individuals who have participated in the smoke detector installation program. The program is a result of a five-year partnership between the Shreveport Job Corps Center and the Shreveport Fire Department. The fire department trained selected staff and students on proper smoke detector installation and these trainees installed detectors in the homes of elderly and needy citizens in the community.

Tulsa Job Corps Center

Tulsa Job Corps Center participated in the 5th Annual Groundhog Job Shadow Day with students visiting companies that serve on the center's Industry Advisory Council and the Executive Community Relations Council Board. The employer mentors included: Williams Companies, Tulsa Fire Department, Tulsa Green Pages-Networks, Volunteers of America, and Oklahoma State University Center for Health Sciences. The employers were extremely impressed with the students and applauded their exceptional employability and social skills.

One of the biggest accomplishments for a young adult is to graduate from an academic institution. On January 25, 2002, 30 students walked across the stage and received their diplomas. Mr. James Murrell, a Job Corps graduate, accomplished writer, singer, national orator, and youth advisor, was the guest speaker to a packed house of visitors. Out of the 30 to graduate, three Redirect students also participated in the commencement exercises held on center. The Hispanic Newspaper (*Hispano de Tulsa*) and other local newspapers and radio stations were present during the ceremony to give their support to the center for consistently representing their ethnic diversity. ■



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PLACE
POSTAGE
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LettersToTheEditor...

Dear Editor,

We have a student who finished his trade in security on center and has been employed. His employer is getting ready to promote him to a position that will require him to carry a weapon. The employer doesn't provide the weapon and he can't afford it. We (at the center) would like to know if we should purchase the weapon for the student and constitute it as "support services".

– Texas

Editor's Note: Absolutely NOT, under any circumstances. If the student were still

enrolled at the center and his "job" was legitimately paid Work-Based Learning, then the center could graduate the student and then he could use some of his "Transition Allowance" to purchase the equipment he needs for work. If the student has already graduated, which is what I understand the case to be, we cannot help him financially.

Dear Editor,

There is a young lady who finished her trade with two failed attempts to attain her GED and has transitioned off center to her job. On her own initiative, she enrolled in

another GED prep program and passed. She called us (the center) and asked if she would still qualify for the money offered on center to complete her GED and we'd like to know if we could get credit for her GED. – Texas

Editor's Note: We no longer give GED bonuses, so the student wouldn't get one in any event. If the student has already graduated, which is what I understand, the center can't take credit for the GED. ■

AskArla...

Dear Arla,

Is Cutting Edge going to create an updated promotional video that the ACs can use in recruitment? The one our office uses is from 1994 and the terms used are obsolete now. Also, the fact sheets are great, but what about a very general Job Corps brochure, appropriate for applicants/parents?

H.R. – Texas

Dear H.R.,

Currently, there are no plans to update the AC video. I can, however, look into this for you. Glad you like the fact sheets; we're hoping to give them a "face-lift" soon. As for a general Job Corps brochure, the only one available now would be the Regional Brochure. We've had some ideas to create a

general Job Corps fact sheet, but this creative is currently on hold for approval. I'll send you some brochures that you might find helpful.

Dear Arla,

Any plans to have a list of key CDSS personnel with phone numbers/email within the region? It would be helpful to know who to contact at the different centers.

C.C. – Arkansas

Dear C.C.,

Funny you should ask! You may have noticed that this issue was a little different than the previous ones. We've included a CDSS Directory that will appear in each newsletter from now on. I requested infor-

mation from the 15 centers in the region to compile this list, but you may note that some centers didn't turn in information and don't have a listing. I would appreciate it if you could update my list as personnel changes take effect. ■

Please send all inquiries, information, and suggestions to:

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